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COUNTRY ~~Polish-occupied Germany~~ REPORT NO. 1

TOPIC 1. Polish Troops in Camp Strans.

2. Soviet Troops in Sprottau.

EVALUATION ~~25X1X~~ PLACE OBTAINED ~~25X1A~~DATE OF CONTENT ~~25X1A~~DATE OBTAINED ~~25X1A~~ DATE PREPARED 14 September 1951REFERENCES ~~25X1A~~

PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

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Troops in Camp Strans.

1. Camp Strans (O 52/B 44) was occupied by Soviet troops up to May 1948, at which time it was taken over by the Polish Army. Up to February 1951, it was continuously occupied by Polish units. The camp adjoins the area of the village of Strans on the northwest and is in a pine woods on the western bank of the Bober River. It is linked with the Ober Leschen (O 52/B 44) railroad station by a single-track railroad line, crossing the Bober River northeast of Strans by a bridge, 150 meters long, and ending at the southern edge of the camp. The camp, whose construction was not yet completed by the end of the war, was being improved by the Polish military administration after 1948, the building operations still continuing in February 1951. *
2. The layout of the camp is divided into five distinct sections. The section located farthest to the east includes the main administration building and some brick buildings serving as junior officers' billets. The three sections adjoining this one to the west include EAs' billets. Each of these three sections is broken down into three residential areas, each consisting of one kitchen and mess building, one headquarters building and four three-story brick buildings serving as billets and containing about 35 rooms each, about 25 of which are merely used for billeting purposes. The camp section located farthest to the west includes the apartment of the camp commander, field officers' billets, eight stretched-out single-story brick buildings to store motor vehicles and ordnance, and motor vehicle repair shops adjoining these storehouses to the south. Two tall storehouses, about 80 meters long, which were not yet used in early February 1951, are located opposite these repair shops and on the south side of the highway running past the southern edge of the camp.
3. On the departure of the Soviet troops from the Strans camp in May 1948, elements of the troops, who had rocket launchers, guns and pontoons, left for the main camp of the troop training grounds located near Neuhammer (O 52/B 34). Prior to that time, no Soviet tank troops were seen in the camp area. Before leaving, the Soviet units stripped the camp to such a degree that reconditioning work to be done on electrical installations and workshop equipment was not yet completed by February 1951. The Polish officers were extremely bitter over the Russians' conduct.

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4. During the summer months of 1948, the camp was occupied by Polish artillery units, referred to as 28th and 29th Polish Arty Div, the designation of division being used for a multi-battery unit, whose detailed organization was not determined. Except for some interruptions, the two units stayed in the camp up to February 1951. No other units were observed. The units occupied all officers' billets and five of the above mentioned residential areas, each room of the billets quartering five or six men. By February 1951, two of the other four residential areas were completed and ready for occupancy, whereas the remaining two areas were still under construction. **
5. In the fall of 1949 and 1950 respectively, from 400 to 500 recruits arrived at the camp. According to the Polish quartermaster, the number of the recruits did not correspond to the increased contingents originally expected by the units. The recruits included only a small percentage of ethnic Germans of the Gleiwitz (Q 51/Y 37) area, namely sons of German parents who had acquired Polish citizenship. The soldiers wore brownish green uniforms with red-bordered black and red-bordered green, pointed patches.
6. The units were motorized. Two truck models, one large and one small, serving as personnel carriers, were observed. In the soldiers' opinion, these motor vehicles were very similar to the personnel carriers used by the US Army. Heavy and light guns were observed in the camp area. The heavy ones, which were towed by caterpillar tractors, were guns of about 105 mm and had barrels 3.5 to 4 meters long and thickening at the muzzle. Twelve guns of this model were counted, but four more guns were believed to be available. The light ones, referred to as AT guns by source, were towed by the smaller type trucks. According to source, numerous guns of this light model were observed in the camp.
7. Prior to the fall of 1949, a Polish colonel, who was generally known to be a Polish nationalist, was the highest-ranking officer in the camp. He was relieved by another colonel who had only a limited knowledge of the Polish language, [REDACTED]
8. Training with guns was generally held outside the camp. From time to time, practice firing was held on the troop training grounds adjoining the camp to the west. In May 1950, all the troops quartered in the camp were shifted, by four trains, to the Torun (Q 54/J 37) area to take part in extensive maneuvers up to late August 1950. According to the men, numerous other Polish units also participated in these maneuvers. At that time, a large tent camp had been set up near Torun. The units located in the Strans camp had no connections with the Soviet troops located in the main camp near Neuhammer nor were joint exercises observed. About 60 percent of the Polish officers and EM were believed to dislike Soviet tutelage and the whole Soviet system, whereas the attitude of the young Polish recruits was not so anti-Soviet.
9. Prior to February 1951, no Polish troops were located in Sprottau (O 52/B 35). Soviet troops of an undetermined branch of service were located in the barracks installation on former Kasernenstrasse. Soviet air force officers of the Sprottau air base were billeted in houses on former Hindenburgstrasse. ***

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25X1A * [REDACTED] Comment. The present information on the evacuation of Camp Strans by Soviet troops in May 1948 confirms a previous report, by another source, of February 1951. See [REDACTED] The Soviet troops shifted to Camp Neuhammer at that time are fairly definitely believed to be elements of the 20th Tank Div. According to another source's statements dated October 1949, elements of this division located in Neuhammer included the 76th Gds Hv Tank SP Regt, the 1711th AAA Regt, the 70 Tank Tng Bn, and the 406th or 409th RL Bn. The three units mentioned first may have already been in Neuhammer prior to May 1948 since tank units were no longer stationed at the Strans camp, as indicated by the present report.

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Also, since guns and pontoons were observed when the units were shifted, the 196 th How Bn and the 206th Engr Bn, both of this division may have been shifted to Neuhammer together with the RL Bn in May 1948; the location of these two units was not determined by source at that time.

25X1A ** ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. The Strans camp is known to be occupied by Polish troops. In 1947, independent motorized artillery units, numbered 28 and 29, were frequently mentioned, their location being undetermined.

25X1A *** ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. No previous reports have stated that Sprottau is occupied by Soviet Army units.

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